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Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00 AGRE-00
DHA-02 /091 W
----------281329Z 007256 /44
R 281018Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 544
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
CINCPAC HONOLULU

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 6672

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, EAGR, VN
SUBJ: PROBLEMS IN VIETNAMESE RICE PRODUCTION

REF: (A) PEKING 334 (B) VIENTIANE 458 (C) VIENTIANE 519

1. IN A RECENT CONVERSATION, HANOI REPRESENTATIVE OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS DISCUSSED THE MAGNITUDE OF THE RICE PROBLEM IN VIET-NAM. LIVING IN THAT COUNTRY OFF AND ON FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE OFFICIAL TRAVELS FROM TIME TO TIME IN BOTH NORTH AND SOUTH. INFORMATION AND VIEWS OF THIS VERY GOOD OBSERVER COMPLEMENT THOSE PREVIOUSLY REPORTED ON THE SUBJECT (REFS).

2. SOURCE SAID THAT, OVERALL, THERE IS A MILLION TON RICE DEFICIT
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IN VIET-NAM (TIME FRAME NOT SPECIFIED). SEVERAL FACTORS ACCOUNT FOR THIS SITUATION, HE CLAIMED. THE PAST WINTER'S COLD SNAP, ALTHOUGH NOT AS BAD AS LAST YEARS, WAS STILL HARMFUL TO THE SEEDLINGS BEING GROWN FOR SPRING TRANSPLANTING. HE PREDICTED THAT THE SUBSEQUENT SPRING HARVEST WILL BE WORSE THAN THE POOR ONE LAST AUTUMN IN THE NORTH. COMPOUNDING THE SHORTAGE, PARTICULARLY IN CENTRAL VIET-NAM WHERE IT IS MOST SEVERE, IS HOARDING

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ON THE PART OF THE FARMERS OF THAT AREA, OF WHICH THERE IS "CONSIDERABLE EVIDENCE", RATHER THAN TURNING OVER MOST OF THEIR PRODUCTION TO THE STATE. THE SOURCE EXPECTED THAT THE HOARDING WOULD CONTINUE TO BE A FEATURE OF THE CENTRAL VIETNAMESE SCENE.

3. IN THE SOUTH, IT APPEARS GENERALLY THAT FARMERS HAVE LOST THEIR INCENTIVE TO WORK HARD TO GROW RICE DUE TO SRV MISHANDLING OF THE SITUATION (E.G., RECENTLY IMPOSED AND POORLY CONCEIVED AGRICULTURAL TAXES), HE SAID. THIS HAS RESULTED IN FA
MERS GROWING
ONLY ENOUGH RICE FOR THEMSELVES OR ENOUGH TO PRODUCE A SMALL EXCESS. THE SRV HAS HOPED THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW ECONOMIC AREAS (NEA'S) THORUGHOUT THE SOUTH WOULDLEAD TO AN INCREASE IN PRODUCTION. WHEREAS ONE CAN SEE THAT NEA'S HAVE INDEED SPRUNG UP AROUND THE COUNTRYSIDE JUST IN FLYING FROM HANOI TO SAIGON (THERE IS CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY ALONG THE ROAD SROM SAIGON TO VUNG TAU WHERE THERE WERE NEVER FRAMS BUT ONLY FOREST PREVIOUSLY"), IT IS OBVIOUS THAT THESE AREAS ARE NOT EASY TO CULTIVATE AND WILL REQUIRE QUITE A CONSIDERABLE PERIOD OF TIME BEFORE THEY ARE PRODUCTIVE. THERE IS ALSO GOVERNMENT MIS-MANAGEMENT OF THE NEA'S, HE SUGGESTED.

4. THE CURRENT RICE SHORTAGE PROBABLY AFFECTS HANOI LEAST OF ALL. THERE IS ALWAYS SUFFICIENT RICE FOR SALE IN THAT CITY, BUT THEN IT IS NATURAL TO EXPECT THAT THE CAPITAL WOULD BE BEST SUPPLIED, THE SOURCE NOTED.
WHITEHOUSE

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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 28-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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